

file 200 into the non-native CAD tool technology file 202 in the manner previously described to supply the non-native CAD tools 212 or other application programs with the appropriate design rule data.

Please substitute for the paragraph beginning on page 14, line 39 the following:

Tools utilizing design rules other than Cadence dfII tools can also build their technology files dependent on the global design rule definition file 200. The global design rule definition file 300 is a plain text file, although in SKILL format in the illustrative embodiment. Accordingly, other CAD tools may easily read and parse the global design rule definition file 200. This is particularly useful for custom designed CAD tools which are not native SKILL programs, such as nonnative design tools and applications 212A-N in the illustrative embodiment. As an example, an initialization program 210 (ParseSkillRules.il) uses global design rule definition file 200 as an input file and generates two output files used by the technology file 202 and Calibre, a verification tool commercially available from Mentor graphics Inc., respectively. Specifically, as for the first output file, ParseSkillRules.il reads and parses global design rule definition file 300 and generates the first output file in a temporary directory. ParseSkillRules.il then transparently loads the first output file to the technology file 202 (Opus 4.4 technology file) to create the illusion for the non-SKILL CAD tool user that the global design rule definition file 300 (SkillDesignRules.il) was referenced directly. The second output file is included in all the Calibre rule definition files to define the variables therein. The following is a code listing of the ParseSkillRules.il program which performs the above-identified process:

Please substitute for the paragraph beginning on page 18, line 1 the following:

Fig. 6 illustrates a flow chart of a process for ensuring consistency of designable applications in a CAD environment in accordance with the present invention. First, a set of design rules defining the physical limitations of the technology with which the design is to be implemented is provided, as illustrated by procedural step 600 of Fig. 6. Typically, the design rules will be defined in a file or files which define specific physical quantities for the physical characteristics of a particular fabrication technology. For example, the width or depth of a path of metal on a substrate. It will be appreciated that such design rules will vary greatly according to the technology used to implement a device. Next, in accordance with the invention, a global design rule definition file 200 is defined in which specific values for design rules of a particular technology are assigned to a global variable, as described with reference to section 314 of Fig. 3, and as illustrated in procedural step 602. If a CAD tool is native, i.e. developed in the same language as the global variables are defined in the global design rule definition file 200, and custom designed, the CAD tool accesses the values of the global variables in file 200 directly, as illustrated in step 610, without further need for translation or compilation of a technology file 202. In this case when a global variable is redefined in the global design rule definition file 200 the custom designed native CAD tools will directly access the updated variable.

Please substitute for the paragraph beginning on page 18, line 18 the following:

All other CAD tools utilize the technology file to indirectly reference the global variables of file 200. Next, the global variables defined in the global design rule definition file 200 are referenced by the technology file 202, as illustrated in procedural step 604. Loading of the global design rule definition file into the technology file occurs through a process of linking, compilation and/or translating, as described hereafter. The technology file is made available for compilation or binding to one or more CAD design tools which contain program statements including one or more of the global variables.

Please substitute the following claims for pending claims with the same numbers.

1. (Amended) In a computer-aided design environment, a method for ensuring consistency of design rule application among a plurality of CAD tool programs, each design rule defining a design characteristic, the method comprising:
- (a) creating a global design rule definition file including at least one global variable having a design rule characteristic assigned thereto;
 - (b) providing a technology file containing a reference to the global variable;
 - (c) initializing one of the CAD tool programs which utilizes the global variable with the technology file reference to the global variable; and
 - (d) redefining the value of the global variable in the global design rule definition file in accordance with modifications to the design rule and conforming the CAD tool program to modifications in the design rule.

Please cancel claim 2, without prejudice.

8. In a computer-aided design system having at least one memory and adhering to a plurality of design rules, each design rule defining a design characteristic, a system for ensuring consistency of design rule application among a plurality of CAD tool programs, the system having a memory and comprising:
- A. a global design rule definition file stored in the memory and including at least one global variable having a design rule characteristic assigned thereto;
 - B. a technology file stored in the memory and containing a reference to the global variable;
 - C. at least one CAD tool program stored in the memory and which utilizes the global variable; and
 - D. means for ensuring that the CAD tool program utilizes the current design rule changes.

16. In a computer-aided design system having a memory, a method for ensuring consistency of design rule application among a plurality of CAD tool programs, each design rule defining a design characteristic, the method comprising:

- (a) creating a global design rule definition file in the memory, the global design rule definition file including at least one global variable having a design rule characteristic assigned thereto;
- (b) providing at least one program statements within one of the CAD tool programs which references a global variable within the global design rule definition file; and
- (c) redefining the value of the global variable in the global design rule definition file in accordance with modifications to the design rule characteristic and conforming the CAD tool program to modifications in the design rule characteristic.

Please cancel claim 17, without prejudice.

18. (Amended) A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave:

- A. program code for performing a computer-aided design function with a value of a global variable representing a design rule characteristic;
- B. program code for referencing the value of the global variable in a technology file; and
- C. program code for utilizing the value of the global variable received from the technology file to perform the computer-aided design function.